

# Home Town to Greet Powers

Big Stone Gap, Va., March 10 —The hill-country neighbors of U2 pilot Francis Gary Powers will welcome him home here Monday in ceremonies that may be long speeches but definitely short on hoopla.

It will be sort of a hero's welcome," said Big Stone Gap Mayor Carl Murphy. But, he said, there will be no parade, no motorcade, no bands when Powers revisits his native Wise County.

The low-keyed exercises will be jointly sponsored by the Wise County towns of Pound, where Powers grew up; Norton, where

his father runs a cobbler's shop; and Big Stone Gap.

Big Stone Gap was picked as the scene of the "welcome home" celebration because it has the necessary facilities—a city armory that will hold 1,500 persons.

"Everything we're going to do will be inside," said Mayor Murphy. "It shouldn't run more than an hour, the whole works. We're going to put a strict limit on speeches."

There should be plenty of speech-makers available. Besides local legislators, invitations have been sent to Virginia Gov. Har-

rison; the state's two Senators, Harry Byrd and A. Willis Robertson; and Rep. Pat Jennings.

Whether all these dignitaries actually will be here Monday afternoon was not announced last night after a conference.

Murphy said he and other people in this area felt "that since he (Powers) had been cleared by the Central Intelligence Agency, he should be welcomed home. We want him to know we're glad to have him back."

The mayor said "unless something unforeseen happens" Powers, the guest of honor, "will

definitely be here."

He said ~~Carl McAfee of Norton~~, an attorney and close friend of Powers and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Powers, "has been in constant touch" with the U2 pilot whose plane was downed over the Soviet Union in May, 1960.

"We understand Powers will stay here a few days at least," Murphy said. He said he didn't know whether Powers' wife, Barbara, now in Milledgeville, Ga., would come up for the welcome home ceremonies "but I kind of believe she will."

"Of course, she'll be welcome."